

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL TO DESIGNATE A TYPE SPECIES
FOR *STETHASPIS* HOPE, 1837 (COLEOPTERA, SCARABAEIDAE)
Z.N.(S.) 2130

(1) By R.D. Pope (*British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road,
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(see vol. 34: pp. 85–87)

I have received a separate of Dr Watt's paper concerning the names *Costelytra* and *Costleya*. It would seem to me and to one or two colleagues that the two names are relatively distinct and should not be confused, especially as the pest species of the two groups are different, both in importance and in the type of plant crop attacked. However, given that application to the Commission is mandatory in order to designate a type species for *Stethaspis* Hope, it would seem to me that the processes leading to the validation of *Chlorochiton* Arrow (said by Watt to be 'perhaps the most familiar name to New Zealand entomologists') are preferable, despite the necessity of invoking the plenary powers.

(2) Reply by Dr J.C. Watt

Separates of my application were distributed widely to taxonomic and economic entomologists in New Zealand, and to specialists on SCARABAEIDAE, especially MELOLONTHINAE, overseas.

I received only one written comment apart from Dr Pope's, from Dr R.M. Emberson (*Lincoln College, New Zealand*), and that was in support of the application, but expressed doubt concerning whether the similar generic names *Costleya* and *Costelytra* were likely to be confused. My own experience is that such confusion is frequent, except among taxonomists. In the period when both names were in current use, typists usually misread *Costleya* as the much better-known *Costelytra*. Such lapses appeared in at least one unpublished report, although not apparently in print. One needs to bear in mind that names of pest species are used much more frequently by general entomologists than by taxonomists.

Verbal comments from a wide cross section of New Zealand entomologists supported the application. Many regretted the demise of the well-known and 'appropriate' generic name *Chlorochiton*, but all preferred *Stethaspis* to *Costleya*.

Stethaspis longicornis (Arrow)... mumu chafer, and *Stethaspis suturalis* (Fabricius)... tanguru chafer, were listed thus in Ferro and others, 1977, Standard names for common insects of New Zealand, *Bull. entomol. Soc. N.Z.*, vol. 4, pp. 19, 34, 40. Thus the generic name *Stethaspis* has already been adopted by the Entomological Society of New Zealand in listing the species of major economic importance.

In view of this, the validation of *Chlorochiton* as proposed in Dr Pope's comment would only lead to further confusion, especially as it is unlikely that a revised edition of 'Standard names for common insects of New Zealand' will be published for several years. The prospect of a checklist of New Zealand Coleoptera is even further removed.

In Article 79b of the Code adopted at the Monaco (1972) Congress (*Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 31, pp. 87–89) the criterion of current use stated in the former Article 23b is continued — that is, application of a name, as a presumably valid name, by at least five different authors in 10 publications in the preceding 50 years.

Costelytra meets both requirements, *Chlorochiton* does not meet the first requirement, and *Costleya* meets neither requirement.

As stated in my original application, the validation of *Chlorochiton* 'seems an exaggerated use of the plenary powers when a more elegant and simple solution can be found by designating *M. suturalis* Fabricius as the type species of *Stethaspis*'. I must, therefore, on both practical and nomenclatural grounds, oppose Pope's proposal to validate *Chlorochiton*.

SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION OF
TEIIDAE GRAY, 1827, Z.N.S. 1920

(see vol. 38, pp. 194–196)

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Certainly the long history of universal acceptance of the family name TEIIDAE, without effective competition of other names for the same taxon, justifies its conservation.

However, it appears that TUPINAMBIDAE Gray, 1825, may not be available since in that work *Tupinambis* was not regarded as valid, but was synonymized in error with '*Uranus* Merrem', 1820, an emendation of *Varanus* Merrem, 1820 (family VARANIDAE Gray, 1827). The only other genera recognized in the family were *Ada* Gray, 1825 (= *Dracaena* Daudin, 1802), *Teius* Merrem, 1820, and *Ameiva* 'Say' (=Meyer, 1795). Art. 11(e) requires that a family-group name 'be based on the name then valid for a contained genus', hence TUPINAMBIDAE Gray, 1825, is not available, nor am I aware that any other author has adopted the name at any family-group level.

Therefore it seems appropriate to modify this request to make plain that TUPINAMBIDAE Gray is not available, rather than making it junior to TEIIDAE Gray, 1827, 'when both names are applied to the same taxon.' The rest of the requests merit approval.

At the same time another name, the family AMEIVOIDEA Fitzinger, 1826 (p.21) should be delegated junior status when applied to the same taxon as the name TEIIDAE Gray, 1827. Fitzinger's name is based on *Ameiva* 'Cuvier' (=Meyer, 1795), which he included in the family. All requirements of the Code for availability of Fitzinger's name AMEIVOIDEA are met except for its ending, of which Art. 11 (e)(ii) permits correction, without alteration of original date and authorship, in properly emended form, conforming with Art. 29 (i.e., rendering it AMEIVIDAE).

We suggest that this petition request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

(1) to use its plenary powers to rule that TEIIDAE Gray, 1827 (type genus *Teius* Merrem, 1820) is to be given nomenclatural precedence over AMEIVIDAE Fitzinger, 1826 (type genus *Ameiva* Meyer, 1795) whenever the two names are applied to the same taxon;

(2) to place the following names on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:

(a) [as in Presch, 1981];

(b) [as in Presch, 1981];